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U.S. Attorney Called In On Naming CIA Source

Associated Press

A U.S. attorney from California was called on the carpet yesterday by top Justice Department officials amid the possibility they will recommend he be fired for publicly disclosing the identity of a key Central Intelligence Agency source in Mexico and Central America.

Department sources, who declined to be identified, said William H. Kennedy, the U.S. attorney in San Diego, had been summoned to Washington. The sources said Kennedy will be asked to provide an explanation for disclosing last week that CIA and top Justice officials have blocked an indictment of the source, Miguel Nassar Haro.

Nassar headed Mexico's federal security agency until last January. Kennedy told the San Diego Union last week he had recommended prosecution of Nassar last November for an alleged involvement in a car-theft ring.

The incident presents particular

problems for the Reagan administration. One of its major legislative campaigns succeeded earlier this month in obtaining congressional approval for a law imposing fines of up to \$15,000 and prison terms of up to three years for publicly disclosing the identity of U.S. intelligence agents, even if the information came from public sources.

The legislation, not yet signed into law by the president, would apply to anyone who had "reason to believe" the disclosure might harm U.S. intelligence and who had engaged in a pattern of activities designed to identify covert agents.

Kennedy, 50, was an assistant U.S. attorney in San Diego until nominated for the top post last November by President Reagan. He serves at Reagan's pleasure.

A Justice Department source said Kennedy has told department officials that he had not disclosed the identity himself but only confirmed the accuracy of an account brought

to him by the San Diego Union.